

CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

DANGER LURKS BEHIND FLIRTATION

"I came after this job only if after I saw it I liked it," I repeated to the manager, who thought I would jump at his offer.

"Well, don't you like it?"

"I don't dislike it, but I know well I could not work and buy my clothes on \$75 a week," I answered.

"You see, Margie, many actresses had told me how much a stock actress had to pay for clothes out of her salary. As soon as I had spoken about my clothes, however, I knew he had intended to buy my stage dresses for me. But I made up my mind I would pretend I did not know it.

"Oh, if you put it that way," he said, "I'll pay for half your wardrobe," glad apparently to get out of paying for all of it.

"No, that won't do at all," I said. "I must have \$250 a week and I'll buy the dresses."

"You are a shark, young woman."

"No, I have only learned to get my share of what the box office makes out of me."

"So you think you are a box office asset, do you?"

"I know it."

"Well, call around tomorrow and I'll have the contract ready to sign, and mind you, it will read at least one new gown a week."

"I walked out of the manager's office, Margie," said Paula, "with mixed feelings. I was glad to know I could get in stock if I wanted it, but I was not quite sure I wanted it. Instead of going back to my room I thought I would take a walk in the park. Usually a brisk walk would clear the cobwebs out of my mind and take the cobblestones off my heart.

"As I entered the park I passed a man who bowed to me with such assurance and apparent good taste I was sure I must have met him somewhere, so I gave him a sort of half

nod of my head in return. As soon as I had done this I knew by the satisfied smile on his face that he did not know me and thought I was willing to flirt with him.

"My first impulse was to leave the park, take a bus for a ride and go home. Then that stubbornness of purpose that has always been mine rebelled. 'Why should I leave this beautiful park and all it means to me physically and mentally just at present to such as that cad when I have done nothing reproachable? Besides it is broad daylight and I am in full possession of all my powers and mentality. Nothing and no one can hurt me in the big city of New York, I argued to myself.

"I hurried along to the mall and sat down there for a few minutes, and then, as my flirtatious gentleman seemed to be out of sight, I resumed my walk.

"I branched off into a more unfrequented part of the park that looked very inviting and sat down on a bench to find to my horror that the man was close on my tracks. He deliberately came over to the bench where I sat and seated himself beside me.

"It was nice of you to find this secluded place for our chat," he said.

"I did not find it," I answered indignantly. "I came here to be alone. I don't know you and I wish you would go away." His face immediately changed.

"If you don't know me, young woman," he said, "why did you speak to me near the entrance of the park and ask me to follow you?"

"I began to be frightened and said: 'If you annoy me any further I will call the police.' Then I got up to go.

"Hold on, young woman, if you call the police you will spend the night at the station."

"Margie, you can't conceive the feeling I had as the horror of the